An Essay
on
Yellow Fever.

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Respectfully submitted to the

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Faculty
of the
Homœopathic Medical College
of
Pennsylvania.

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On the first day of February, One Thousand
Eight hundred and fifty seven.

by

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Portsmouth, Norfolk County
Virginia —

Yellow Fever

This disease is also called "Febris Flava", "Typhus Scleroides," and "Jaundice Typhus."—

These names were given to it no doubt from the yellow hue which it imparts to the skin— It is a disease of Tropical Climates and is very fatal in its character, however, within the last few years opportunities have occurred for the trial of the Homœopathic Practice, and as in everything else it has proved itself conquerer to a great degree, and there is no doubt but that the time will come when yellow fever will be looked upon

as quite simple under this treatment.

It is Endemic in marshy places and other low districts where there is Stagnant water, and decaying vegetable matter — a malaria arises from these causes which acts as the exciting cause of the disease.

The predisposing causes are various, viz. Bilious Temperament, improper mode of living, neglect of cleanliness, an effort in the system to become acclimated &c. &c. It is occasionally brought on by sudden changes of weather, excess of eating and drinking, immoderate exercise, watching and want of rest, also excess of sleep, as the majority of cases are taken when asleep. Copious loss of blood, evacuations from the bowels, fear &c. &c.

Those who are much frightened

and apprehensive for themselves are most apt to be assailed: the fearlessness of medical men and nurses, is the chief preventive. It was said by Dr. N. Chapman that "courage is the greatest help to man in all trials", and such is my opinion.

There is no definite time of its operations. Some sicken immediately on exposure to its influence, and others remain for weeks without contracting it.

I have seen persons exposed to its influence for several weeks without taking it, and they would go to the country or some place where the air was pure, and the disease would attack them almost immediately, or at least within a few days.

In its first stage it is apt to be taken for Bilious Fever. But there

is much difference. e.g. Bilious may occur at any time, this only at certain periods. Bilious is a remittent. this a continued. Bilious fever has its seat in the liver. this is chiefly confined to the stomach. "The black vomit of this disease is entirely different from the black discharges of bilious fever. which are homogeneous, and consist of altered bile not altered blood. Uncomplicated yellow fever never ends in regular intermittent: while this is an exceedingly frequent termination of bilious fever." (Dr Wood. Vol. I. Page 315) There are also many more which I will not here mention. The convalescence is quite different. In yellow fever it is sudden. but in Bilious it is slow and generally leaves behind it some visceral affections.

There is a variety of opinions

concerning its contagion. Some of our most eminent Physicians (viz. Dr N. Chapman Dr Geo B. Wood, Dr Rush &c.) contend that it is not contagious; while others equally eminent (Dr Holcombe of Natchez & others) say it is. In my humble opinion it is not contagious, for (as I have said above) I have seen innumerable cases, where persons would leave the infected district, and go away in different directions, some into the country, others on the Sea-Coast, and be attacked with the fever and in not a single instance have I known of any one else contracting the disease from them. I have also known persons in capacity of nurse, who have never had the disease, constant in their endeavors, for weeks without the least intermission, escape without an attack. But, as I said before this may be owing to

fearfulness and the kindness of Providence in preserving them for the benefit which their services would be to the helpless invalid.

"This disease rarely occurs more than once in the same person. Second attacks of yellow fever are probably not more frequent than second attacks of small-pox; and when they do occur are generally light" (Wood. Vol. I. Page 315

When it makes its first appearance in cities and towns, it generally begins among the lower class, where a great many live together and are very careless about their mode of living, also those who live adjacent to wharves and marshes.

But if it assumes the epidemic form it attacks all without regard to position in life or location of place. But it is a singular fact, that sometimes it will.

seem to select a street or square, for its operations, and its effects will be most shocking, while in the next street or square there will hardly be a case. It has also been known to attack, as it were, a single house, and confine itself chiefly to that spot. But these strange Phenomena are above our comprehension.

It is generally more fatal to those of a corpulent habit, and persons habituated to "hard drinking". I knew a case, where a man and his wife were attacked: he was a very corpulent man and had never experienced much sickness - She was very thin and had not had a well day for two or three years - he was taken and died in three days: & She recovered. I cannot account for this strange Phenomenon. It would appear to most

of us, that the healthy person (the man) would be most liable to withstand the attack because the vital powers are most active and consequently better able to produce a healthy action, but in this case it seems not to be so. It may, perhaps, have been the disease from which the woman was suffering previously which had a tendency to reduce the violence of the attack. (the complaint was disease of the womb.) and therefore facilitated the recovery.

It also differs in its manner of attack upon different persons. In some it will commence with a severe chill; others, severe pains all over the body; others, with only a slight headache, but it has been frequently observed that those cases which were most

severe in the beginning are generally the easiest to master, and recovered in a very short time: while those which were very slow in developing themselves were most fatal, and lasted considerably longer. I knew one case where the fever continued for fifteen days without intermission and the patient recovered.

In some cases the intellect will not be disturbed at all, even unto death, they die sometimes without a groan. Others again will become delirious from the very commencement of the disease and die raving maniacs.

This disease has baffled the skill of most of our Allopathic Physicians, and is withal a very formidable disease to combat with, however it is becoming comparatively

ously since the discovery of the law.
"Similia Similibus Curantur."

This disease is divided into three stages. (Viz) 1st Febrile or Inflammatory. 2nd Nervous or Jaundice. and 3rd Congestive or Black Vomit.

It makes its appearance in various ways but generally with some of the following

Symptoms

1st Stage — Giddiness, wandering pains in limbs and back. slight chills running down the spine. nausea, and sometimes vomiting of bilious matter. frequent fainting — corresponding with cold stage of Intermittent Fever. eys red. fiery. and injected. tongue whitish with red margin. great thirst. and sometimes delirium. This stage con=

=times about twenty four or forty eight hours, after which the symptoms abate and sometimes almost entirely disappear leaving nothing but a slight uneasiness in the stomach, which com=
=mences six or seven hours: then the symp=
=toms appear again with considerably more violence and then comes

2nd Stage ——— This stage of the com=
=mences with yellowness of skin, appearing first in the conjunctiva, and extending suc=
=cessively to the forehead, face, neck, and chest, and sometimes affects the whole surface. flushed face, the matter which is vomited becomes darker, mind wand=
=ering and delirious, severe burning in stomach, bowels costive, pulse more ac=
=tive, and great mental oppression: after this there seems to be an intermission, and

then appears the

3rd Stage. —— Characterized by Black-vomit. tongue black and dry. pulse intermit, increase of thirst. breathing irregular. cramps in bowels and legs. commences deathly, extremities cold. cold colliquative sweats. Diarrhoea, and discharges similar to Black-vomit. Haemorrhage from anus. uterus. gums &c. suppression of all the secretions. no urine is passed. skin very dry. mouth and tongue dry. and parched. tumidity of abdomen. convulsions. loss of intellect and finally death terminates the sufferings of the patient.

"In fatal cases, death takes place most frequently on the fourth, fifth. or Sixth day. and sometimes as late as the ninth or even the eleventh. In some

rare instances, in which the disease runs into a protracted typhoid form, it may be considerably postponed. (Wood. Vol I. Page 309.).

It is very seldom however that you find all these symptoms, but in all cases you will find more or lyss of them.

Treatment.

This is comparatively easy. very few remedies being required.

1st Stage — The treatment in this stage may commence with a warm foot-bath: after which Acon. and Bell. in the following prescription —

℞ Tr Acon. gtts vj	℞ Tr. Bellad gtts vj
Aquæ Puræ ℥ij ℥	Aquæ Pura. ℥ij ℥

— may be alternated every half hour at first, and then put further

* Note. Tea spoonful to be given at a dose.

apart until the fever abates or ceases entirely, which will generally occur in six or eight hours. Then the Acon should be stopped and Belladd. continued at longer intervals.

If there be gastric irritability and vomiting, Ipecac. prepared as above should be administered after each paroxysm. and the chest may be sponged very frequently with ice water: it is very grateful to the patient and does not interfere with the action of the remedies. Cold applications may be put to the head to keep it cool. In very mild cases there will scarcely be need of any other treatment. _____ When the 2nd St. Stage ___ makes its appearance there will be a diminishing of the foregoing symptoms: and also burning

and pain in the stomach, restlessness, thirst, nausea, &c. &c. The chief remedies in this stage are Arsen. and Lachesis. in the proportion of Ten globules to Two ounces of water. (We always used 30th dil.) alternated as in first stage. But symptoms will sometimes arise which require other remedies.

If the nausea is distressing, Ipec. or Tart-em. will be necessary, these remedies should be given in small doses and not too frequent. If diarrhoea or dysenteric symptoms appear. Merc. v. may be given with benefit. Coff. c. will be found useful when there is great nervous sleeplessness at night. Secale. cor. and Sabina if abortion threatens. Nux vom. may be used in persons much habituated to the use of alcoholic liquors. Crotal. may be used in this stage in place of

Lachesis. should the latter prove inefficient

3rd Stage. When Black-vomit occurs the chief remedies are Nitras Arg. and Arsenic. one grain of the 2nd trit. of the former, and the latter, as used in second stage; a teaspoonful may be given alternately every fifteen minutes until the Black-vomit ceases, then stop the former and continue the latter but at longer intervals. In many cases I have seen the vomit stopped by a single dose of Nitras Arg. if given immediately. I have also seen Carb. veg. successfully administered in Black-vomit and passage of black stools.

When there is suppression of urine and other secretions, Cantharis will be found beneficial, also a warm hip bath. This has produced very happy

effects under my notice. When haem-
orhage from uterus, nose, anus and gums,
occur. Aconite may be given with success.

During the whole progress
of this disease the patient should be
kept perfectly quiet and in a well
ventilated room: cleanliness should
also be attended to. The patient may
be allowed to eat ice in small quantities.
it is much better than water, as it allays
the thirst and does not overload the
stomach, consequently it is not so
apt to produce nausea, and vomiting
as water would be.

Should the bowels be con-
fined they may be opened with
enemas. Simple ones should only be
used.

A person needs on diet and I will

conclude.

The greatest attention should be paid to the diet in all stages of this disease, as almost all relapses have been occasioned by a neglect in this important point.

In the first stage the patient seldom requires nourishment unless the case be protracted. Arrow-root frozen, is very nutritious and palatable, also rice water, and frozen cream without eggs.

There is in the second stage a very distressing hunger, but this should not be gratified, as injurious effects will certainly accrue from it. The above diet is quite sufficient.

When the patient is

convalescing he may be allowed to chew Beefsteak, but must swallow only the juice. Beef-soup, chicken-soup &c is allowed, but nothing solid is allowed in the stomach for three or four days after convalescence is fairly established.

Slight stimulants such as very weak Porter or wine may be allowed, in confirmed convalescence they may be allowed a little of their accustomed stimulus during the course of the disease.

Hoping that my own exertions with the assistance received from Eminent Authors, may meet the approbation of the Faculty.

I am Respectfully
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